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I believe

William Lee
Hunton

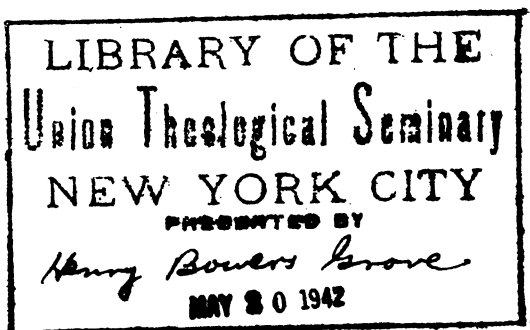


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To
THE YOUTH OF THE CHURCH
WITH THE PRAYER THAT THEY MAY
ABIDE IN THE FAITH
AND BRING FORTH
THE FRUITS THEREOF.

PREFACE

The Apostles' Creed is the briefest summary of the Christian faith we have; it is at the same time the most widely accepted creed of Christendom. It is the foundation of all baptismal confessions of the Church, both of the East and of the West. In fact the Creed, as we have it, is a growth out of these baptismal confessions. The Christian life is therefore rooted in the Creed and grows through the acceptance and application of its essential truths.

It is not essential that we should know it historically or necessary that we should examine it critically as to authorship and the degree of its authority in the various branches of Christendom; but it is vital that we should know it, accept it and understand that its every word and statement is an essential part of the truth as it has been revealed through Christ.

To the end that the Christian may confess his faith in the words of the Apostles'

Creed understandingly and believingly these meditations which were originally studies merely for personal cultivation of faith and which were later furnished to the large number of those young Christians who are the readers of *Lutheran Young Folks* these thoughts on the Creed are now given permanent form in this little book which it is our prayer may serve to strengthen and confirm the faith of those who read.

W. L. HUNTON.

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I BELIEVE

THE APOSTLES' CREED

Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. Matthew 10: 32.

With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Romans 10: 10.

I BELIEVE

In God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ his only Son Our Lord;

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
Born of the Virgin Mary;

Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, dead, and buried;

He descended into hell;
The third day He rose again from the dead;

He ascended into heaven,
And sitteth on the right hand of God the
Father Almighty;
From thence He shall come to judge the
quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost;

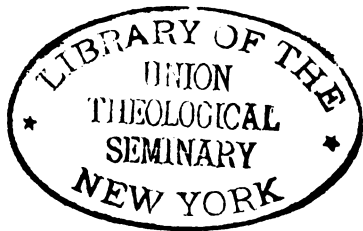
The Holy Christian Church,
The Communion of Saints;

The Forgiveness of sins;

The Resurrection of the body;

And the Life everlasting.

Amen.



PURPOSE AND USE OF THE CREED

“Bring to mind thy faith, look within thee. Let the Creed be, as it were, a mirror to thee. There look upon thyself, whether thou believest all those things that thou professest to believe, and rejoice daily in thy faith. Let it be thy riches; let it be, so to speak, the daily garments of thy mind.”
Augustine.

But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay; but by the law of faith.

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Romans 3: 21-28.

ORIGIN AND USE OF THE APOSTLES' CREED

"The Apostles' Creed is in its contents apostolic truth," as Luther says, "taken from the Bible and summarized." It is a growth, rather than a definite confession, which was delivered orally to the catechumens and memorized by them.

Changes or additions were made as it became necessary to unfold the evangelical truth implied in and connected with its simple statements. Knowing the present form, it can be traced back as to its teachings and vital facts to Apostolic times and is rightly recognized as the oldest creed of the Christian Church.

The foundation of all baptismal confessions in the Church of the East as well as in the West, it is the most widely accepted and generally used creed of the Christian Church and because of this fact it is deserving of the most devout study.

The brevity and comprehensiveness of the Apostles' Creed, inclusive of the essentials of the doctrines concerning God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, fit it peculiarly to be the creed of the people—a creed which should be indelibly impressed upon the mind and heart and thus made a moulding influence in the life of every Christian.

A devout study of the creed is food for the soul. These brief meditations are intended as spiritual nourishment to the strengthening in the faith, to the growth in grace and to patience in suffering, as well as to the blessed hope of everlasting life for all Christians older and younger into whose hands they may come.

I BELIEVE

*"Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."
Mark 9: 24.*

There is a tendency to fickleness in faith and indifference to creeds which is very widespread. This tendency is due to the influence of rationalism and scepticism, wordliness and religious indifference. We have therefore every reason to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith.

The poison of many isms is present in the spiritual atmosphere in which we live and breathe. The best antidote we can possibly have is a living personal faith—a faith which understands, accepts and appropriates the historic creed of the Church as a personal statement of belief.

The opening statement of this old Apostolic Creed is the crux of the situation—"I Believe." This thing of believing is bound to be a purely personal matter. Men may buy a proxy to represent them as soldiers

under their country's flag, but proxies as heroes of faith under the banner of the cross are impossible.

All the intense personality of religion is wrapped up in this one-lettered word—"I," with which the great Creed of Christendom opens. It covers the whole ground of personal religious responsibility.

To quicken individual faith and strengthen it is the earnest desire of all those who are vitally interested in the growth of the Church and the salvation of souls. To this end it is vital that every professing Christian should understand the intense personality implied in the fact that the Church teaches her members to say—"I believe."

GOD

One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Ephesians 4:6.

The Church's creed opens with a personal confession of faith in God. Few realize how intensely personal a man's religion necessarily is. I myself believe in a personal God. My salvation depends not on my knowledge of; but on my faith in God. The Lord says, "Give Me thy heart." The mind will follow later.

God, that is the good. The words are synonymous. God is the Supreme Good. In this respect He is the exact opposite of Satan. Faith, therefore, in God as the supreme God should leave no hold in the heart for Satan.

Again, I believe in God, that is in Hebrew "El" and "Elohim." It is a confession of my faith in the Unity and in the Trinity. It is faith in the God who does, who

created heaven and earth, who restored ruined creation, the God who, when man because of his helplessness in sin needed mercy and forgiveness revealed Himself as Jehovah, the covenant God for there is none else. We therefore in our faith flee to Him as a strong tower into which we may continually run and be safe.

God, who knows better than we, what we most require has put first of all as the primal thought in our personal faith the confession, "I believe in God." What a privilege it is to believe! The sceptic may doubt; the rationalist may argue; we count it a privilege to exclaim, "Lord, I believe: help Thou mine unbelief."

THE FATHER

But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him. I Corinthians 8:6.

The word "Father" has a meaning so definite and so simple as at once to bring God within our comprehension. To confess Him as our Father gives a child the privilege of apprehending God.

To speak of God in general terms, we readily become lost in a maze of attempts to bring within human comprehension His immensities and infinitudes. We exclaim, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" The wonderful laws and forces of nature reveal God; but the revelation deepens the mystery. But when the Word reveals Him as "Our Father," it is with profound gratitude that we incorporate this tender word, so readily understood, into the articles of our faith.

Father! We know what that means and what it implies. The father loves his children, protects them, provides for them, educates them, trains them and does everything in his power which will promote their well-being. The patience, devotion and self-sacrifice of a true father is sublime. Love makes the father provide a home for today and do everything in his power to insure an inheritance for tomorrow. Children understand this and trust their father. With confidence they rely on his love and protection. God who is our Father in and through our Lord Jesus Christ, does all this and more for us. Hence it is we emphasize our faith in God our Father by making this title a part of our confession of faith.

ALMIGHTY

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. Revelation 4: 8.

Combine all the engines in the world; add to these all the dynamos in existence, as well as the new improved "Liberty motors"; supplement this power by the energy of all the hydraulic rams and compressed air pumps and all the power generators known to modern science, and what a horse-power you will have developed! Perhaps you can conceive of such a force; but it seems doubtful.

Yet such energy, compared with the power which is implied in the single word, almighty is less than that of a baby compared with a giant. All these energies combined could not move this old world on which we live. Yet God holdeth it in the hollow of His hand. There is none equal to God, for He alone is Almighty. Who then can withstand Him? How safe are those who put their trust implicitly in Him!

Satan, the prince of the world is mighty; but God the Ruler of the universe is almighty. If we trust in God and look to Him, we are safe. What a blessing it is that we are privileged to believe in God who is Almighty! The blessings of our faith grow in our estimation as we approach a realization of Him in whom we believe. This faith in One who is "Almighty" is a guaranty of the success of the Christian Church and the assurance of the individual Christian's life.

MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

They lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is. Acts 4: 24.

The scientist and the philosopher tax their wisdom in vain when they attempt to solve the mystery of the origin of the universe. But God has revealed to the believer, in the simple statement of inspired history of facts, just how the world came to be—"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Made "out of nothing." To those who have already accepted the "almightiness" of the One who spake our great universe into existence this is a very simple and natural article of faith. "As for God His work is perfect." We naturally accept the statement of revelation that "God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good." An imperfect thing can not come from a perfect God.

We cannot gainsay the plain statement of the Scriptures. The world did not come into being of itself, or by chance, nor did it exist from eternity. God made it out of nothing.

As the Almighty and Omniscient is the Creator of both heaven and earth, faith at once finds a satisfactory explanation of their beauty and perfection. Is there any wonder that the most skilful engineers and the finest architects formulate their plans according to the laws of the universe? These are the laws according to which the Divine Architect made our wonderful world as a part of that great universe. When He had finished His work in His omniscience He declared it "very good."

This earthly home which God has given us is of His own making. Let us appreciate it more and give greater evidence of our faith in and love for the Creator who provided the earth as our temporary home in which by faith we are to look to Him to make us worthy of the place which He has prepared for all who believe in Him.

JESUS

When eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called Jesus, which was so named of the angel. Luke 2: 21.

Jesus was our Lord's personal name, the name given to Him by the angel. This name means Saviour. It was given because Jesus would "save His people from their sins."

The whole work of the atonement which God in Christ had planned, through which He would reconcile the world unto Himself is told in that name. What's in a name? There is salvation in the name of Jesus. Jesus—Saviour from guilt and sin and death!

The very name should preserve us from wrath and fear, passion and lust and desire; from everything that is vile and unholy and degrading. All this the word should mean to us when we accept Jesus as our personal

Saviour. If it does not mean this, the repetition of the Creed must be only an idle thoughtless repetition of words. It is certainly not the confession of a believing soul of the moving principle of life.

What a comfort the name Jesus is to His believing disciples who know the meaning and the power of His name and through confessing it are assured of the promise that Jesus makes when He says, "where two or three are gathered together *in My name* there am I in the midst of them."—a guarantee of the omnipotence and the omnipresence of this Saviour who acts through His own attributes and exercises the power in His own name for our salvation. What a privilege to believe in, worship and serve Jesus!

CHRIST

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. Acts 16:31.

We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. John 6:69.

Christ, that is the 'anointed one.' This is the official title of Him whose personal name is Jesus. Christ is the Messiah, the anointed One, of whom the woman at the well of Jacob said, "He will tell us all things."

When we make this title a part of our creed, we make ourselves sharers in the hopes and prophecies of the ancient Hebrews. As the rainbow arches the sky and covers with glory all that lies between, so this word "Christ" spans the centuries of Old Testament times and makes brilliant with hope and beautiful with promise every message and word from Moses to Malachi. Those promises and messages are like so many pearls which modern scholars, lacking living

faith, may seek to destroy; but which true believers will gladly gather and hold.

The promise made in Eden is fulfilled in Christ who pays the debt we had contracted. He pays it to the uttermost farthing. It is He who delivers us from Satan's power and death's dominion.

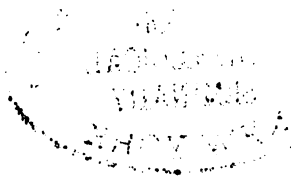
Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. As Mediator between God and man, He lays hold on the helpless one in the kingdom of that mighty one, Satan, and by the power of His own almightiness lifts him up to God and places him upon the eternal throne. He fulfils the will of the Father, executes the covenant of grace, and effects an atonement which brings the Triune God in love over to the side of the poor sinner that he might overcome his great adversary. How sure it makes our salvation to believe in "Christ."

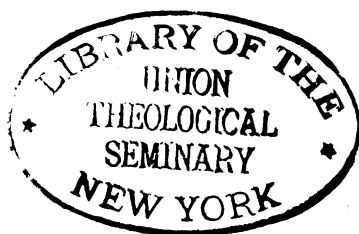
JESUS CHRIST

To us there is one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him. I Corinthians 8:6.

“Jesus Christ” is the embodiment of the perfect love of God. The names are most significant. How precious are the titles as we understand them. “Jesus of Nazareth, always going about doing good.” “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.” “Christ” covers a sinner’s salvation. “Jesus” is inseparably linked with a saint’s walk and reward. “Christ” who trod the winepress alone, has rendered satisfaction for us and given us grace so that we may be able in gratitude to follow Jesus who says, “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.” Yes the *life*. It is more than dogma in the creed. “God manifest in the flesh is the Scriptural statement which is the very foundation of our confession, which declares—“I believe in Jesus Christ.”

Indeed the mission of the Saviour to this earth would be a farce, if we did not see the manifestation of the Father in the person of Jesus and did not firmly believe that the question of sin and its guilt and penalty had been settled forever by Christ on Calvary. All the joy there is in this world over the birth of Jesus is in anticipation of the blessings of atonement which flow from the cross of Christ. How significant the names by which we know Him!







"THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED; HEAR YE HIM."—MATT. 17:5.

HIS ONLY SON

This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him. Matthew 17:5.

We, by adoption, are the sons of God. God has many such sons. It is a blessed privilege thus to be "partakers of the divine nature." But God has but one begotten Son. He it is who "begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light," is "Very God of very God." He is "of one substance with the Father." He holds a position which none of us, later born, can fill. The Father speaks from the Mount of Transfiguration and says—"This is My beloved Son! Hear Him!" Turning from those who would rob Him of His divinity and make God a liar, we look upon Jesus and rejoice to know that He is "fairer than the sons of men." It is He who is "the One altogether lovely." But through grace it is our privilege to share His life, His glory, His throne. To Him "the Spirit is given without measure." Through Him that Spirit

is poured out upon us and we in our bodies are made "temples of the Holy Ghost."

The very names and adjectives which give us our limited ideas of His illimitable nature and personality help us to get some conception of what He is in Himself and what He may be to us. Only let us turn away from those who would analyze His being and deny the revelation which God has given of Him as contrary to, because beyond their poor reasoning. Then, looking to Him in faith through Word and Sacrament He will dwell within us, and "in Him we will live and move and have our being."

Jesus, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills the breast;
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence rest.

Jesus, our only joy be Thou,
As Thou our Prize wilt be;
Jesus, be Thou our Glory now,
And through eternity.

—*Bernard of Clairvaux.*

OUR LORD

Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. John 13: 13.

What a joyous privilege it is to bow the knee at the name of Jesus, the Christ and confess Him as "our Lord." Lord! That is Master, Ruler, Sovereign, the One who has authority, sovereignty, dominion. Applied to Christ, assigning to Him power and Lordship we affirm our faith in His essential divinity. He is "one with the Father," "the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Jesus, the Son of Mary is "God manifest in the flesh." The perfect man living the beautiful life is He in whom "dwells all the fullness of the Godhead." It is true the natural man can not see in the Babe of Bethlehem, the Carpenter of Nazareth, the lowly Galilean riding on an ass, the Ruler and Sovereign of the universe. Neither can you see the landscape with all its beauty of stream

and sky upon that glass plate in your hand. But just bring it into right focus in front of the light and behold silver-capped mountains and velvet valleys, sparkling rivers, a veritable paradise on the canvass. Just so by the aid of the Spirit which illumines the heart with a divine light it is our privilege to see in Jesus the One altogether lovely, the very Lord of life and glory. And this Lord is my very own, appropriated to myself in the individuality of my personal faith. Yet my confession spoken collectively like the opening words of the "model prayer" links me in a most beautiful way with "all saints and all souls." What a blessed Lord, to be freely shared with the whole world! May the day be hastened when the world will confess Him as Lord.

WHO WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY GHOST

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. Luke 1: 35.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Matt. 1: 18.

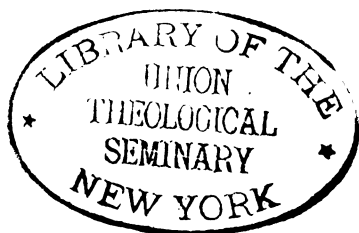
How great is the mystery of our God! A mystery of mysteries is the truth stated in the expression "God manifest in the flesh." Beyond human reason to comprehend in our creed it is made a chief article of faith.

Jesus is not merely a model in human perfection, beauty and strength. He is not another Hercules in physical power, or Solomon in human wisdom; for, unlike these, "He was conceived of the Holy Ghost." God is incarnate in Jesus. This truth is confessed in the most ancient creeds and most clearly

taught in the Scriptures. The Word of God is very explicit. It confirms the Apostles' Creed. Faith apprehends, that He who was begotten of the Father is "conceived by the Holy Ghost." In fact these words of our creed are caught from the lips of the angel, who said to Joseph, "Fear not to take unto thee, Mary, thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." The angel had already informed Mary of the miraculous conception by the Holy Ghost, a fact which she had doubted.

So today, it is only ignorance or wilful unbelief which makes any one doubt what Gabriel declared before the wonderful birth at Bethlehem, that because of this miraculous conception, "therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of Thee shall be called the Son of God."

God and His holy angels speak the truth. We believe. Like those who saw the evidence of His divinity amid the scenes of His crucifixion, in faith we exclaim, "Truly this is the Son of God."





"UNTO YOU IS BORN THIS DAY, . . . A SAVIOUR
WHICH IS CHRIST THE LORD."—LUKE 2:11.

BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David):

To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. Luke 2: 4-7.

Jesus was clearly and evidently man. Except that He was without sin he was in every respect like as we are. He was a real human being. He had a human body and He had a human soul. He called Himself, the Son of man. He was therefore, although distinct and apart from other men, because of His absolute perfection, a true man.

Thus we see in Jesus divinity in humanity, —humanity enshrouding divinity. It is truly

wonderful and some are ready to say, "How can these things be?" We ask how can a little brain such as the skull of man inclose, contain pictures that reach across the sky, thunderclaps that sound to the very heavens, histories that sweep the centuries and great armies that change the political map of the world. Explain how that small brain can receive and retain all these. You cannot; yet you believe in your thoughts and have a world of beauty and history and wonder in your brain.

Will you then question the ability of God who made the world and your brain, so to incarnate Himself as to bring His essential divinity into perfect union with a sinless human body such as Jesus assumed when He was "born of the Virgin Mary?" It is not a question for argument; it is a simple revelation for acceptance by the believer.

We, therefore, do not doubt; but freely confess our faith in a divine, yet human Saviour who can be touched at all points with the feeling of our infirmities, who is yet with-

out sin and who will stand before us as our "Way," our "Truth," our "Life." Jesus is the one to whom we may go in every time of need. The "second man, the Lord from heaven," is the Saviour, your elder Brother, your Lord and Redeemer, who, in a most marvelous manner, was "born of the Virgin Mary."

SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE

And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged Him, to be crucified. Mark 15: 15.

Of Pilate we know little; but we all know the stigma which rests on his name. The creed turns our eyes for a brief moment from the Suffering One that we may look at Pilate.

Pilate, like the politician, was a master in the art of evasion; but he could not wash his hands of this responsibility. For a few fateful moments he wavered between conviction as to right and political expediency, then he yielded and tied the millstone around his neck which has dragged his name and memory into a veritable sea of infamy.

What a lesson to those who would evade manifest duty and put the burden on some one else! "Suffered under Pontius Pilate" is a clause in this ancient creed of the church



"I AM INNOCENT OF THE BLOOD OF THIS JUST PERSON;
SEE YE TO IT."—MATT. 27; 24.



which fits fearfully into the loose times in which we live—times in which devotion to truth is growing increasingly rare and when the number of chameleons who take their tint and hue from their surroundings are alarmingly on the increase.

We can not evade our responsibility, if sin goes unrebuked and evils abound without our protest. We may try to shift the blame from our shoulders; but we will fail. We must face our personal responsibilities. If we have not the strength to stand for our convictions, we may attempt to wash our hands in innocency when, in fact, Christ is crucified anew under us and upon us will rest the like stigma to that which has branded and blackened the name of the Roman governor.

WAS CRUCIFIED

And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him. And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

And with Him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.

And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors. Mark 15: 25-28.

The details of the crucifixion of Christ were clearly foretold by the prophets, whose writings were in the hands of the Jews hundreds of years before the tragedy on Calvary. In a wonderful manner the types and figures of the Old Testament were fulfilled in the crucifixion of Christ. He Himself used the brazen serpent which Moses held up in the wilderness as a type of His own death on the cross, and from which those bitten by sin are to receive His healing power. Abraham's surrender of Isaac prefigures the gift of the Father, who spared not His own Son. It also prefigures the gift of the Son who



"I, IF I BE LIFTED UP FROM THE EARTH, WILL DRAW
ALL MEN UNTO ME."—JOHN 12:32.



spared not Himself for us. Isaac went forth bearing the wood and Jesus went forth from Jerusalem on the road to Calvary bearing His cross. The paschal lamb, of which not a bone was to be broken, was a type of the great Paschal Lamb, who, though He was crucified between the thieves, was exempted from the breaking of the bones to which they were subjected. Thus, numbered with the transgressors and associated with the lowest criminals, prophecy is fulfilled, and we see in the crucifixion of the Christ the climax of proof of the Old Testament Scriptures, which point to Him as the Saviour from sin and death.

Is it any wonder that the symbol of His suffering is today the coveted emblem of service and faith? Through the crucifixion man obtains all that makes life precious, and, therefore, every true Christian rejoices in the cross as the sign of Christ's redeeming sacrifice. It is the Church's glory, for He who suffered the painful death on Calvary is the "power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation."

DEAD

And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said thus, He gave up the ghost. Luke 23: 46.

The death of Christ is an historic fact. The passion sorrows and the crucifixion terrors had done their work, and the physical strength of Jesus having been exhausted, He gave up the ghost. It was the natural result of what He endured. If He did not die then there is no explanation of His disappearance.

Jesus died. He died not for Himself, but for sinners. He "tasted death for every man." "He was delivered for our offences." "He bare our sins in His own body on the tree." "The wages of sin is death." Jesus has paid the penalty. It was a voluntary act on His part; for though they crucified Him, yet according to His own words it was His own free volition to suffer and die. He said, "I lay down my life—no man taketh it from Me."

Dead! What a mystery in the fact! How helpless our poor thought in the presence of the death of the First Born of every creature. He "in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." He who raised Lazarus from the dead is Himself dead.

How perfectly He is identified with our humanity, allowing even death to pass upon Him. He who became incarnate of the Virgin Mary would complete the human life. Therefore He goes to death and the grave. He died just as men die. He took not on Himself the nature of angels, but was bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh.

Pilate delivered the body to Joseph to be buried on the strength of an official certificate that He was dead. It is the seal to our faith that the wages for our sin—death—have been paid. Rome, through her officials has guaranteed the atonement, for as the Scripture has it—"He poured out His soul unto death." Thus it is that Jesus made His soul an offering for our sins.

BURIED

Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand. John 19: 41, 42.

Like all born of woman, Jesus was buried. There can be no doubt about it, for they "made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone and setting a watch." Thus the dead Christ was left in the darkness and mystery of the grave. And that grave was borrowed. It had been hewn for other occupants. The suffering and the death were not His own. He died for the sins of others, and paid their penalty. So also His lifeless body is placed in a grave which belongs to another. He died for others: He was to rise again for others: so this borrowed grave seems eminently proper. He needed no grave of His own. He chose, however, to lie in the tomb of His fellowman. Yet He who had "not a

place to lay His head in life," through the kindly act of Joseph of Arimathea, "made His grave with the rich in His death." Thus were the words of Israel's greatest prophet, Isaiah, wonderfully fulfilled—"He made His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death." He who had thus humbled Himself in dying was honored in His burial. The Jewish rulers would have had Him buried with the malefactors, but having parted with their right to dispose of His body, Pilate unwittingly adds another link to the golden chain which connects the minute details of Hebrew prophecy with the person of the Man of Galilee. In Joseph's new sepulchre, "where never man had yet lain," the dear body of the world's Redeemer lies "buried," and the human eye sees a lost cause and a dead man: but faith, remembering the prophecies and recalling His own words, sees in Him who was "despised and rejected of men" the Man of prophecy who is the One "chosen of God and precious."

HE DESCENDED INTO HELL

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

By which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. I Peter 3: 18-20.

The creed states positively what the Scriptures tell us plainly, namely, where Jesus went. (I Pet. iii, 18-20.) Theorize as we may, if language has meaning, here is a simple statement of an historical fact that speaks for itself. Just where this place of departed spirits is need not concern us. The fact which is vital to our faith is that He descended to the realm of the dead that He might triumph over the powers of hell openly and proclaim even there the "good tidings of great joy." Hence it is that Augustine says: "Christ

descended into hell, that He might conquer it, and deliver from thence the souls of the pious and godly, by the which He hath opened for us a passage into Paradise, that so we who live in the end of the world have this privilege beyond the ancient saints, that if we depart out of this life holy and good, we shall pass by the flaming sword at the entrance of Paradise, and shall not go to that place where those who died before the coming of Christ expected Him." It was as Conqueror and Master that Jesus descended into hell, that He might preach unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient and bring forth saints there held in captivity. Matt. xxvii, 51-53). When Christ began to build His Church He promised that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." True to that promise, He takes possession of the "keys of Hades," and will forever bar from it His redeemed ones, for, as is stated by one of our great confessional writers, "Christ descended into hell and abolished it for all believers."

THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD

And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee.

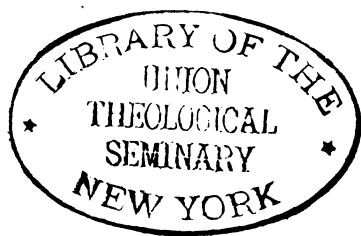
Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. Luke 24: 5-7.

In the Old Testament the resurrection of Jesus is predicted. Jesus Himself clearly foretold that He would rise again. Indeed the resurrection is everywhere stressed in His teachings. That the doctrine of the resurrection holds a most important place in Christian faith is clearly evident from the numerous references to it in the Epistles.

Indeed, the Church stands or falls by the resurrection. The resurrection fact is the keystone of the arch of Christian faith. For "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." For



**"WHY SEEK YE THE LIVING AMONG THE DEAD? HE IS
NOT HERE; BUT IS RISEN."—LUKE 24:5, 6.**

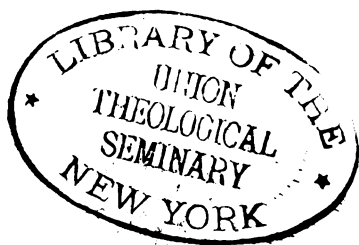


"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." But Paul who uttered these words is in his life an unanswerable argument for the truth of the resurrection. As an intellectual enemy of Christ, enjoying the fullest confidence of the Jewish rulers, he knew all they could say against the resurrection; but those arguments had no weight when he had seen the risen Lord on the way to Damascus. He was so profoundly impressed that he made the fact the central doctrine of his teaching, maintaining it at the cost of everything which before his conversion he had held dear.

The disciples, after witnessing the resurrection, as apostles made "Jesus and the resurrection" the theme of their preaching. They confirmed their opinion of its importance by changing from the Jewish Sabbath to the Christian Lord's Day, the resurrection day, and by the faithfulness with which they celebrated the Lord's Supper, which, while it commemorated His death, also confers "life and salvation," for it is the legacy of love from a crucified but risen and glorified

Saviour. This blessed sacrament is meaningless if it was merely "the last will and testament," of a poor Nazarene about to be crucified; but faith finds in it the true body and blood.

Faith lays hold on the risen Christ and sees in this wondrous event the power of God and the wisdom of God. It is the seal of confirmation on the character of Christ, the guarantee of the completion of the atonement, the truth of the Scriptures, the stability of the Church and the future of the soul. What is "the power of His resurrection" who is "declared to be the Son of God with power according to His resurrection from the dead?" This glorious fact is the very core of salvation; it is the very heart of the gospel.





"HE WAS TAKEN UP; AND A CLOUD RECEIVED HIM OUT
OF THEIR SIGHT."—ACTS 1:9.

HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN

And when he had spoken these things while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven. Acts 1:9-11.

The Ascension is the completion of the Resurrection. In the Epistle to the Hebrews we are told that "If He were on earth He should not be a priest." The high priest when he had offered up a sacrifice, took the blood of the victim into the Holy Place and laid it upon the altar. Jesus our great High Priest, after He had made the sacrifice, "entered not into the holy places made with hands, which are the figure of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."

In broad daylight, while the apostles "beheld" with no possibility of delusion or deception Jesus "was taken up." The resurrection was witnessed by none of His followers. They had opportunity to be with Him and to have proofs of His resurrection; but if they were to go forth as witnesses of His ascension, it was necessary that they should see with their own eyes, and thus be capable of bearing testimony to the fact. Is it any wonder that it is a part of the Apostles' Creed? It is the final climax in the wonderful earthly life of Jesus. It is a fact of which every believer should be very certain.

The Scriptures give us the reason for the ascension. "He ascended on high, leading captivity captive, and gave gifts to men, even the rebellious." What a wonderful explanation! And epitome of the Resurrection! Our Saviour's ascension was so to speak, a rehearsal of the final act in the drama of redemption. In His ascension He led captivity captive. By the power by which He defied the laws of the physical universe, He has given a guarantee of His spiritual

power, existent in His love by which He will "draw all men unto Him." He Himself has said,—“I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me.”

“Look, ye saints; the sight is glorious,
See the Man of Sorrow now;
From the fight returned victorious,
Every knee to Him shall bow:
Crown Him! Crown Him!
Crowns become the Victor's brow.”

AND SITTETH ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, THE FATHER ALMIGHTY

But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God. Hebrews 10: 12.

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12: 2.

Upon the work of Him who was "despised and rejected of men" the Father Almighty smiles approval, and being "chosen of God and precious," the work is not in vain. He is to continue the central figure in God's universal empire, so that "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow and every tongue confess Him Lord."

At God's right hand our Lord entered into everlasting and perfect glory and dominion. The Father Himself gave Him the place at His right hand, having exalted Him

and given Him a name which is above every name. The ascended Christ exercises absolute authority and holds unlimited dominion. He sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty until God makes His enemies His foot-stool.

What matters it then if for a brief season we do not see "all things put under Him?" God in His wisdom, in the fullness of an irresistible power, will make effective that glorious guarantee that our loving Jesus shall be Lord of all. He is head over all things in His Church, and shall receive dominion and glory and a kingdom. "For the suffering and death He shall be crowned with glory and honor."

In view of his position, we may well ask our attitude. With what confidence we ought to come before His presence. Our cares, our burdens, our needs we should commit to Him, and in abiding faith anticipate the time when we shall be drawn after Him into glory to worship around the eternal throne of Him Who dwelleth in glory evermore.

What thrills should go through the very soul of the child of God in the presence of such glory of final triumph. We gladly exclaim,—

“Hark, those bursts of acclamation!
Hark, those loud triumphant chords!
Jesus takes the highest station;
Oh, what joy the sight affords!
Crown Him! Crown Him!
King of kings, and Lord of lords.”

FROM THENCE HE SHALL COME TO JUDGE THE QUICK AND THE DEAD

*When the Son of man shall come in his glory,
and all the holy angels with him, then shall he
sit upon the throne of his glory:*

*And before him shall be gathered all nations;
and he shall separate them one from another,
as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:*

*And He shall set the sheep on his right hand,
but the goats on the left. Matt. 25: 31-33.*

Is Christ coming again in person to this earth? Will men on this earth see the Man of Galilee, who wore the purple robe and the crown of thorns, whose hands and feet were pierced and whose side was riven by the cruel spear? If the Bible is true there can be but one answer. He who ascended above the clouds to the right hand of power and the throne of glory shall return from thence in like manner as He went into heaven.

St. Matthew tells us that "the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with

His angels, and then shall He reward every man according to his works."

St. John tells us that "He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him."

Indeed both testaments tell us of that which our own consciences confirm, namely, that we must be judged. There is a day of reckoning. When that day comes all men, quick and dead, shall be brought before the judgment seat, the faithful that they may be raised to everlasting blessedness in the rewards which are promised, and the wicked to everlasting punishment—the due "reward of their deeds." In this judgment according to works, there is no contradiction of justification by faith. The just shall be rewarded, not on account of their good works, but because of the atonement and righteousness of Christ; their works being the evidence of their regeneration and the test of their sanctification, the fruit of their justification which is by faith alone.

He who came as a Redeemer comes as a Judge. How grateful we are for this knowledge! The One who comes to judge is He who delights in mercy and who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. As penitent sinners—new-born as the children of God—we anticipate that “great day” when the redeeming work of Christ will be consummated and closed. With mercy in His heart and pardon upon His lips, His words shall be—“Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of Thy Lord.”

We believe in His return in power and great glory to judge the earth. Indeed we live under the comfort and inspiration which the anticipation of that coming brings. It is our joy that every day brings the final, though uncertain day nearer.

I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY GHOST

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2: 2-4.

Faith in the Holy Ghost, who was sent into the world to magnify the finished work of Christ is an essential of true religion. We speak freely of spiritual life, but often have very vague ideas and are liable to overlook the work of the Holy Spirit in our redemption. The disciples of John, although they had been baptized and believed in Jesus, told the apostle they had not so much as heard that there was a Holy Ghost. We fear many professing Christians are equally ignorant. Yet a true faith requires a confession of belief in the Holy Ghost along with the Father and the Son.



**"VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO THEE, EXCEPT A MAN BE
BORN OF WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT, HE CANNOT
ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD."—JOHN 3:5**



This Holy Ghost is a person, not merely an agent or energy of God. As a person the Holy Spirit is associated with persons, notably in the formula for Christian baptism. The Holy Spirit is not God the Father, for He addresses the Father and intercedes with Him. He is not God the Son, for the Son Himself says He will send Him. He is "another Comforter" who speaks and acts as a separate person.

The Holy Ghost is God. He is linked on equal terms with God the Father and God the Son in both the baptismal formula and the apostolic benediction. Christ implies the divinity of the Holy Ghost when He speaks of "the sin against the Holy Ghost." Peter specifically declares it, when he tells Ananias, "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Paul asserts it, when speaking of the body as being holy, because it is the temple of the Holy Ghost.

The very existence of the word of God is ascribed to the Spirit by the statement that "holy men of God spake as they were moved

by the Holy Ghost." In connection with that other statement that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," we realize that other statement that "all Scripture is called into question if we deny the divinity and the personality of the Holy Ghost. Rather let us confidently believe in and welcome this Divine Person for whose presence it even was expedient that Christ Himself should depart that He might come to lead us into all truth and sanctify us day by day, and finally lead us in the way which we should go until we land safely with Christ in God in the eternal home of those who shall know God in Christ through the Holy Spirit, and, knowing, shall eternally give praise and honor to Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

“THE HOLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH”

Upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Matthew 16: 18.

For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office.

So we being many, are one body in Christ, and all members have not the same office; 12: 4, 5.

The Church in which we profess faith is holy because the Holy Spirit is constantly at work in it, seeking to make men holy, and because its members, who are by no means perfect, by the grace of God lead holy lives. Jesus Himself taught while in the world that among His followers there would ever be both good and bad. It is like a net which gathers all kinds of fish, like a field in which wheat and tares grow together. Though all are called to be saints, “there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not.” To make believers “holy,” that is, to sanctify them, is the work of the Holy Spirit

who operates in the Church. This is effected not momentarily, but by degrees, and is never perfected in this life.

It is the Christian Church, because it is composed of those who believe in Jesus Christ, all who anywhere and everywhere are looking to Him for salvation, and are bringing forth the fruits of holiness to His praise and glory.

It is the Christian Church, for it rests on Christ, who has built it upon the foundation of His apostles, to whom He committed the work for which He had prepared them, and for which work they were further qualified by the power which was bestowed from on high. Applying to these men the redemption purchased by Christ, the Holy Ghost wrought in and with them for the work of Jesus and crowned their labors with success. The results were so marked that on the Pentecostal birthday, when Peter, inspired by the Holy Ghost, preached the initial sermon, fully three thousand souls were added to those who believed in this Christian Church.

By our confession we declare ourselves to be united in faith to this Body of Christ through which the spirit operates—the Christian Church. It is an invisible body, visibly manifest in its wonder-work among men and for them. Judged by its life, by its work, by the results which have come to pass through its labors, representing as it does today the highest and best life of the world to which it brings all that counts for the highest and broadest civilization, the things upon which all true life rests, there should be nothing to which we would more readily give our assent as an article of faith than the Holy Christian Church. And not be deemed a privilege to be a part of the Holy Catholic Church which is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets," Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone?"

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. I Corinthians 12: 12, 13.

For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Romans 12: 4, 5.

In confessing that we believe the "Holy Christian Church" is "the communion of saints," we recognize the fact that the Church is more than a visible organization, with an earthly ministry and a congregation of human beings worshipping in costly and stately buildings. The Church is more than the eye can see, or the ear receive, because from its divine origin and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost it includes that which is supernatural and goes far beyond our earthly senses in

range and scope. Hence it is an article of faith in the Creed of the Church.

Saints are not good people as the popular idea makes them. The saints at Corinth, harboring great offenders unrebuked, covetous and proud, were yet called "saints" by the Apostle Paul. Sainthood is a calling, not the accident of an act. A "saint" is one set apart "not for works of righteousness which we have done," for "by grace are ye saved through faith—not of works, lest any man should boast."

The "communion of saints" is the statement of our belief in the breadth of our real Christian fellowship which is marked and measured alone by God who is acquainted with the character and the conduct of all professed believers in all Christian communions.

The members of the true Church of the living God, scattered and divided and perhaps unknown to each other, have communion with the Triune God. Through this fellowship with God they are of one mind and knit together through Christ in God in one

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